



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (10/05/06)**

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**CHRIS THEODORE FROM ASC TO RECEIVE SPE® GLOBAL  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEERING LEADERSHIP AWARD NOV. 13**

**TROY, (DETROIT) MICH.** – Chris P. Theodore, vice-chairman of American Specialty Cars (ASC, [www.ascglobal.com](http://www.ascglobal.com)), has been named the 2006 recipient of the SPE® Automotive Division's new *Global Executive Engineering Leadership Award*. Theodore will receive the award at this year's 36<sup>th</sup>-annual *SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala* on November 13.

New this year to SPE's lineup of executive leadership honors, the *Global Executive Engineering Leadership Award* was created to recognize an executive who has exhibited outstanding engineering leadership throughout his/her career and is considered to be an "Automotive All-Star" within the global transportation industry. Candidates are evaluated based on their overall leadership in engineering roles throughout their careers, as well as the success of their performance in these roles, such as the number of new vehicles the candidate championed, had significant involvement in, or launched.

Often called the "Father of the Ford GT" and "an engineer's engineer," Theodore has been associated with a number of high-profile vehicle launches – including the Ford GT, new Ford Mustang®, new Ford 150 pickup, Chrysler PT Cruiser®, original Dodge Viper®, second-generation Chrysler minivans, original Jeep® Grand Cherokee, and the Fiat Spyder Turbo in the early '80s – and has held notable executive engineering positions at several major vehicle manufacturers during his 30+-year career in the auto industry.

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*Chris Theodore of ASC to Receive Global Executive Engineering Leadership Award*  
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Theodore has been vice-chairman of ASC since October 2005, where he is responsible for the company's product-development activities. Prior to this, he was employed by Ford Motor Company from 1999-2004, beginning as vice-president of North American Product Development and retiring as vice-president of Advance Product Creation.

Before this, Theodore was employed by DaimlerChrysler Corporation from 1989-1999, rising from executive engineer to general manager of the minivan and small-car platform teams, and then to senior vice-president of Platform Engineering for the corporation. During this time, he helped design the Chrysler Technology Center. From 1985-1987, he was director of Engine Engineering at American Motors Corporation, and later chief advance engineer of the Jeep Grand Cherokee.

Theodore has previously worked in the specialty-car segment. He was vice president of Engineering at Cars & Concepts Inc. of Brighton, Mich. from 1982-1985, where he launched the Ford Mustang convertible, the Dodge Daytona T-Top, and numerous other products. Also, from 1980-1982, he worked for Legend Industries of Hauppauge, N.Y. – the first independent company to be recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a vehicle manufacturer. There, Theodore oversaw development of the Fiat Spyder Turbo and DeLorean Twin Turbo.

His career began with stints at all of the "Big Three," working at Chrysler Corporation from 1975-1980 as senior chassis engineer on the original Chrysler minivans, and on the Chrysler/Calspan Research Safety Vehicle. From 1974-1975, he worked at the Detroit Diesel Division of General Motors Corporation as a research engineer on the company's four-stroke diesel program. He began his professional career at Ford as a product engineer, developing the "Easy Rider" pneumatic cab suspension for the Ford CL9000 truck. He also was a college intern and engineer in Ford's Heavy Truck Group, helping develop instrumentation for Ford's first turbine truck.

Educationally, Theodore holds an MBA from Michigan State University (1989), an MSME from the University of Michigan-Dearborn (1975), and a BSME from the University of Michigan (1972).

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Chris Theodore of ASC to Receive Global Executive Engineering Leadership Award  
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Commercial vehicles on which Chris Theodore had involvement or provided direction include the:

U of M Urban Car 1972,	1995 Chrysler Minivan*,	Ford 500*,
Ford CL9000 Heavy Truck,	Plymouth Prowler*,	Mercury Montego*,
Chrysler / Calspan Research Safety Vehicle,	2000 Dodge Neon,	Ford Freestyle*,
Fiat Spyder Turbo,	2001 Chrysler PT Cruiser*,	2005 Ford Mustang*,
DeLorean Twin Turbo,	2002 Ford Thunderbird,	2005 Ford GT*.
Jeep Grand Cherokee,	Ford Expedition,	
Dodge Viper,	Lincoln Navigator,	
	2004 Ford F150,	

Theodore has also been involved in a number of concept vehicles, notable among them the:

Ford Model U*	Ford Bronco*
Mercury Messenger*	Ford GR1*
Ford 427*	Ford Fairlane*
Ford Cobra Concept*	

*(An asterisk (\*) indicates vehicles on which Theodore provided significant direction or had significant involvement.)*

Prior to the start of the ***SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala***, Theodore will be introduced to the media at a short press conference, then honored at a VIP cocktail reception reserved for program sponsors and senior-level automotive executives. The VIP cocktail reception, this year sponsored by Ticona Engineering Polymers, has been called "One of the absolute best networking opportunities in town" by supplier executives attending the event. The event will be held at Burton Manor ([www.burtonmanor.net](http://www.burtonmanor.net)) in the suburbs of Detroit.

American Specialty Cars ([www.ascglobal.com](http://www.ascglobal.com)) is a full-service specialty-vehicle partner for automotive manufacturers, specializing in vehicle design, body engineering, composite body packages, and open-air roof systems. Founded in 1965 and headquartered in Southgate, Mich., the company has facilities in Michigan, California, and Kentucky. For more information, contact the company at: ASC, One ASC Center, Southgate, MI 48195; phone: +1.734.246.0086; or e-mail [pamela.ramirez@ascglobal.com](mailto:pamela.ramirez@ascglobal.com).

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Chris Theodore of ASC to Receive Global Executive Engineering Leadership Award  
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SPE's **Automotive Innovation Awards Gala** is the largest competition of its kind in the world and the oldest recognition event in the automotive and plastics industries. Dozens of teams made up of OEMs, tier suppliers, and polymer producers submit nominations describing their part, system, or complete vehicle module and why it merits the claim as *Year's Most Innovative Use of Plastics*. This annual event typically draws over 800 OEM engineers, automotive and plastics industry executives, and media. As is customary, funds raised from this event will be used to support SPE educational efforts and technical seminars, which will help to secure the role of plastics in the advancement of the automobile.

The mission of SPE International is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Automotive Division is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic based-composite developments in the global transportation industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the **SPE Automotive Innovation Awards Gala**, visit the SPE Automotive Division's website at [www.speautomotive.com](http://www.speautomotive.com), or contact the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE Automotive Division, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA.

For more information on the Society of Plastics Engineers International or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at [www.4spe.org](http://www.4spe.org), or call +1.203.775.0471.

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**ATTN. EDITORS:** A high-resolution version of this image is available by contacting us at [p.malnati@sbcglobal.net](mailto:p.malnati@sbcglobal.net).